



## 5-Year Plan (2010 to 2015) Kittitas County Conservation District

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### Organization of the Kittitas County Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

- *In 1939, the State Soil Conservation District Law was passed by the Washington State Legislature. There was widespread support in the Kittitas Valley for a conservation district that resulted in the establishment of the Kittitas Conservation District in 1942. By 1947, upper Kittitas County landowners established the Cle Elum Conservation District. In 1962 the Kittitas and Cle Elum Conservation Districts were combined to form the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD).*

### Function of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *To seek out all manner of technical, financial and educational resources and coordinate or focus them to meet the needs of local land managers working to conserve soil, water, and related natural resources.*

### Who We Serve & Why

- *We serve the citizens of our community (county, state, country) to ensure the long term use of natural resources in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner using non-regulatory, voluntary approaches.*

### Mission of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *Provide leadership, technical, educational and financial assistance to landowners and land users in their utilization and management of natural resources.*

### Vision of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *The Kittitas County Conservation District is recognized by all private landowners as a source of financial, technical and educational assistance in Kittitas County; and by local, state and federal authorities as the organization of choice to implement on-the-ground stewardship activities.*

### Values of the Kittitas County Conservation District

*The Kittitas County Conservation District respects and honors both private and public lands, as well as resources and people. We demonstrate this by valuing:*

- *Integrity*
- *Honesty*
- *Innovative approaches and new ideas*
- *Serving those that voluntarily engage us*
- *Fiscal and public responsibility*
- *Locally-led, economically sustainable resource conservation*
- *On the ground, science-based solutions*
- *Stewardship for our properties/resources*
- *Sustainability – meaning implementation of economically and environmentally sound and socially acceptable conservation practices*

### Trends Impacting Conservation in the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *Increased development focused in the UGA and oscillating with economy*
- *Increased population with decreasing lot sizes*
- *More landowners with less or no practical experience*
- *Economic base in the county is moving away from agriculture toward recreation and residence*
- *Fallowed lands creating noxious weed and fire safety concerns*
- *Increased regulatory pressure (Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act)*
- *Increased litigation pressure on resource management*
- *Increased demand for water supply with fluctuating climatic conditions*
- *Increasing operational costs for agricultural producers*
- *Interest in renewable resources (wind, solar, biomass)*

- Increased interest in and funding for forest management/health
- Market based restoration/land management opportunities
- Increased need for response to natural disaster events (flooding, fire, soil erosion)

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## Strategies to Address Trends

- Continue involvement and coordination with local jurisdictions on resource issues, increase awareness by local jurisdictions of the KCCD's technical and financial capabilities
- Buffer/facilitate between regulatory agencies or third party interests and landowners
- Be a clearing house for conservation technical and financial assistance programs
- Investigate renewable energy opportunities and impacts of those opportunities on local resources
- Continue to provide Irrigation Efficiencies program for water users
- Promote sustainable small acreage management through workshops and other outreach activities
- Continue financial and technical assistance programs for landowners not eligible for current federal programs
- Support land protection programs to encourage continued farming and ranching
- Educate landowners and land managers to develop property in an appropriate manner
- Assist irrigation districts to improve delivery system efficiencies
- Seek funding to support or maintain current and future projects and programs
- Seek conservation opportunities to help reduce agricultural operational costs

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## Critical Geographic Areas:

- All lands within KCCD boundaries (includes unincorporated lands and the City of Cle Elum).

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## Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

- Water Quantity – Improve water use efficiency through conservation measures and storage opportunities to meet needs of water users and work with partners, to achieve base flows in high priority streams by 2020.
- Water Quality - Meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals in Kittitas County.
- Fish & Wildlife - By 2015, complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for the high priority areas. By 2020 complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for medium priority areas.
- Development & Natural Resource Impacts- Develop a strategy and an information campaign to address land use fragmentation & small parcel impact on natural resources.
- Soil Quality & Health- Maintain soil productivity and health to meet or exceed NRCS soil quality criteria.
- Range Health- By 2020, document positive trend (health) on rangeland in Kittitas County.
- Forest Health- By 2020, document positive trend (health) on forestland in Kittitas County

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## Information – Education Priorities and Goals:

- Annually, reach 80% of landowners/users in Kittitas County and continue to reach all 3rd graders in county. Help educate other age groups by working with local schools, producing newsletters (circulation 13,000), hosting workshops and field days, maintaining webpage and blog, participating in Kittitas County Fair, and providing educational materials to media, and local organizations (e.g. service clubs).

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## District Operations Priorities, Goals:

- By 2015, the KCCD will have staffing and programs in place to meet the needs of landowners and resource users and maintain the reputation the district has developed for being a locally led problem solving group. This will be accomplished in part by establishing our resource needs, remaining on the leading edge of conservation issues, and continuing to recruit quality supervisors and associate supervisors.



## Staffing Needs

Maintain the following current positions:

- District Manager
- Financial Manager
- GIS Specialist
- Engineer
- 2 Resource Technicians
- Project Manager

Add the following positions or responsibilities (same position may have multiple abilities):

- Assistant District Manager
- Assistant Financial Manager
- Engineer in training
- Construction observer
- 2 Resource Technicians
- Grant Writer
- Permit specialist
- Farmland protection specialist
- Hydrologist
- Riparian Restoration Specialist
- Forester

## Annual Budget Needs

- Summary of the annual budget needed to carry out the plan of the Kittitas County Conservation District based on the above information.

Salaries/Benefits (staff of 9)	\$520,000
Equipment & Office Supplies	\$105,000
Programs & Cost Share	\$3,000,000
Rent & Utilities	\$45,000
Transportation	\$27,000
Training	\$14,000
<b>Total Annual Budget</b>	<b>\$3,711,000</b>

## Key Decision Makers

The first and most important key decision maker is the landowner or land manager. Their management decisions affect the condition of natural resources on a daily basis. There are a multitude of other key decision makers who can affect regulations governing land management and resources and sources of funding to establish and maintain technical and financial assistance programs in Kittitas County. They are as follows:

### Local

- Commissioner Paul Jewell, Kittitas County, 205 W 5<sup>th</sup> Room 110, Ellensburg WA 98926
- Commissioner Alan Crankovich, Kittitas County, 205 W 5<sup>th</sup> Room 110, Ellensburg WA 98926
- Commissioner Mark McClain, Kittitas County, 205 W 5<sup>th</sup> Room 110, Ellensburg WA 98926
- Mayor Charles Glondo, City of Cle Elum, 117 E First, Cle Elum WA 98922

### State

- Representative Bill Hinkle, 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District 122D Legislative Bldg., PO Box 40600, Olympia, WA 98504-0600
- Representative Judy Warnick, 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, 436 John L. O'Brien Building, PO Box 40600, Olympia WA 98504-0600
- Senator Janea Holmquist, 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, 106B Irv Newhouse Building, PO Box 40413 Olympia, WA 98504-0413
- Governor Christine Gregoire, Office of the Governor, PO Box 40002, Olympia, WA 98504
- Ted Sturdevant, Director, Washington State Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600
- Phil Anderson, Director, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, 600 Capitol Way N., Olympia, WA 98501
- Dan Newhouse, Director, Washington Department of Agriculture, PO Box 42560, Olympia WA 98504-2560

### Regional

- Mark Clark, Executive Director, Washington Conservation Commission, P.O. Box 47721, Olympia WA 98504-7721
- Peter Goldmark, Commissioner of Public Lands, Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 47001, Olympia, WA 98504-7001
- Alex Conley, Executive Director, Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board, 1110 West Lincoln Ave, Yakima, WA 98902
- Roylene Rides at the Door, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 316 W. Boone Ave., Suite 450, Spokane, WA 99201
- Judy Olson, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency, 316 W. Boone Ave., Suite 568, Spokane, WA 99201-2350
- Barry A. Thom, Regional Administrator, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service - NW Region, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle WA 98115
- Colonel Anthony Wright, Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 4735 E. Marginal Way South, Seattle, Washington 98134
- Robyn Thorson, Regional Director, US Fish & Wildlife Service, 911 NE 11th Ave, Portland, OR 97232
- Judy Hallisey, USFS District Ranger, 803 W. 2nd Street, Cle Elum, WA 98922
- Michelle Pirzadeh, Acting Regional Administrator, Region 10, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

- Dick Wallace, Washington Council member, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, 110 Y Street Vancouver, WA, 98661
- Stephen J. (Steve) Wright, Administrator, Bonneville Power Administration, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, OR 97208-3621
- National**
- U.S. Representative Doc Hastings, 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, 1323 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515-4704
- Senator Maria Cantwell, US Congress, 717 Hart Senate Office Bldg Washington, DC 20510
- Senator Patty Murray US Congress, 173 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510
- President Barack Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500

## **Priority Actions – 24 Months**

- The following is a summary of the priority actions needed to start the 5-year plan of the Kittitas County Conservation District. These actions should occur between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2012

### **Water Quantity**

1. Undertake a public information effort to educate and involve the public and state legislators in determining the actions needed to improve water supply reliability.
2. Support statewide efforts to maintain and enhance an irrigation efficiencies program
3. Seek and apply for additional funding sources (Ecology's Water Infrastructure and Columbia River Program; NRCS- Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) and Conservation Innovation Grants; , etc.) to provide financial assistance to water right holder's and irrigation companies/districts
4. Coordinate with the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Program (YRBWEP) to secure funding for projects in tributaries (e.g. Manastash Creek)
5. Recovery Funding Board, Washington Conservation Commission, Washington Department of Ecology, and others.
3. Continue to assemble and maintain Tributary Teams as part of the Yakima Tributary Access & Habitat Program (YTAHP).
4. Establish a landowners educational guide/brochure (or webpage) that explains how to plan and implement fish screen/ passage and water metering projects.
5. Support efforts of the Big Game Management Roundtable to address big game impacts on agricultural lands.

### **Development & Natural Resource Impacts**

1. Continue the small acreage program offering educational, technical and financial assistance that specifically includes small livestock operations and targets landowners who may not be eligible for other programs (e.g. NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program).
2. Participate in the Kittitas County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) implementation plan development.
3. Coordinate with agencies and land conservancy organizations to promote conservation easement programs.
4. Offer technical assistance to Kittitas County
5. Participate on the Kittitas County flood task force technical advisory group to address county wide flooding impacts.

### **Water Quality**

1. Coordinate with the groups/agencies currently monitoring water quality in Kittitas County.
2. Determine the need and location of livestock water diversion points and work with the Department of Ecology, legislators, and Aquavella Water adjudication process to find an acceptable method to install off-channel watering facilities.
3. Gather info regarding stormwater management requirements, potential funding sources and baseline conditions on urban and suburban lands within KCCD boundaries and coordinate with local jurisdictions.
4. Demonstrate streambank stabilization projects to prevent sediment movement.

### **Soil Quality & Health**

1. Seek assistance from a NRCS agronomist for local growers interested in soil quality & health.
2. Conduct a seminar on no-till practices. (e.g. at hay growers) with NRCS agronomist.

### **Fish & Wildlife**

1. Continue to construct/install fish screen and fish passage projects in the high priority areas.
2. Continue to apply for funding to design and/or construct fish screen or fish passage facilities. Funding sources include the Yakima Tributary Access & Habitat Program (BPA funding), Salmon

### **Rangeland Health**

1. Support rangeland monitoring effort by WSU Extension (staff) by providing staff to assist with field work.
2. Support NRCS and WSU Extension's efforts to provide technical and financial assistance to rangeland operators.
3. Support Wild Horse CRM plan to enhance and improve rangeland health by providing technical assistance with monitoring and seeking implementation funding.

### **Forestland Health**

1. Continue to offer assistance to private landowners to implement "firewise" projects

2. Continue to offer forest land assessments by a qualified forester focused on forest health.
3. Continue to assist housing developments (e.g. Wagon Wheel) to become a Firewise Community.
4. Investigate opportunities for biomass utilization related specifically to forest health improvements. This includes monitoring efforts such as the Tapash Collaborative and participating as needed.
5. Work with other agencies (eg. DNR, USDA NRCS & FSA) to utilize established programs that assist non-industrial, private land owners with forest resource issues.

### **District Operations**

1. Development Rural Service Center concept and pursue funding to begin construction.



**Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices**